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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND AND
FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 31 January 1992, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. MAJOR

(United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern
Ireland)

Members: Austria
Belgium
Cape Verde
China
Ecuador
France
Hungary
India
Japan
Morocco
Russian Federation
United States
Venezuela
Zimbabwe

Mr. VRANITZKY
Mr. MARTENS
Mr. VEIGA
Mr. LI Peng
President BORJA
President MITTERRAND
Mr. JESZENSZKY
Mr. RAO
Mr. MIYAZAWA
King HASSAN II
President YELTSIN
President BUSH
President PEREZ
Mr. SHAMUYARIRA

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The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m. and resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: I now invite the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China to make a statement.

Mr. LI Peng (China) (interpretation from Chinese): For the first time in the 47-year history of the United Nations the Security Council is meeting here today at the level of Heads of State or Government of its member States. I am very glad to have the opportunity to attend this meeting as the representative of the People's Republic of China and, together with my colleagues from other countries, to discuss major international issues including in particular ways to give support to a greater role for the United Nations in maintaining peace and promoting development in the world, as well as to exchange views on other issues of common interest.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Right Honourable John Major, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, for his initiative to hold this meeting.

I should also like to express once again our warmest congratulations to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali on his assumption of the office of Secretary-General.

The present-day world is at a vital turning-point. The old structure has come to an end, while a new one has yet to take shape. The world is moving in the direction of multipolarization. World peace, national stability and economic development are aspirations shared by peoples everywhere. The tense face-off between the two major military blocs in Europe, which lasted for nearly half a century, is no longer in place. Some regional hot spots have either been or are in the process of being removed. The international situation has eased to some extent.

(Mr. Li Peng, China)

However, factors threatening world peace and causing international tension have not been removed completely. While some old contradictions and confrontations have disappeared, new ones have cropped up, rendering our world neither tranquil nor peaceful.

The Middle East question remains unresolved after the Gulf war, and the peace talks between the Arab countries and Israel are likely to be a long and difficult process. In some European countries conflicts of varying intensity, or even wars, have broken out as a result of ethnic strife. No one can say for sure that similar conflicts and wars will not take place in other parts of Europe.

What deserves the close attention of the international community is the fact that the developing countries, whose populations constitute the overwhelming majority of the world total, are finding themselves in an increasingly difficult position. The gap between the North and the South continues to widen, with the rich countries becoming richer and the poor poorer. That state of affairs, if allowed to continue, will eventually lead to fresh disturbances or even new regional conflicts. The stark reality shows that the questions of peace and development, the two principal themes of the present-day world, remain to be solved.

In contrast to a turbulent Europe, the Asia-Pacific region enjoys relative stability. The signing of the Paris Agreement has laid the foundation for a final settlement of the Cambodian conflict. Following their simultaneous admission to membership of the United Nations, the North and the South of Korea have signed a protocol on mutual non-aggression and a joint declaration on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The situation on the peninsula is moving towards relaxation and stability.

(Mr. Li Peng, China)

Quite a few countries in the Asia-Pacific region have enjoyed a rather high economic growth rate thanks to political stability at home. This region has now become a dynamic and promising region in world economic development.

A stable and economically prosperous China not only is in the fundamental interests of the Chinese people but also constitutes an important factor making for peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and in the world as a whole. Over the past decade or more, China has firmly implemented the policy of reform and opening to the outside world initiated by Comrade Deng Xiaoping, which has brought enormous changes to the country. Now China enjoys political stability, social tranquility, ethnic harmony and sustained economic growth. With full confidence, the Chinese people are advancing on the road of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. As a developing country with a huge population, China knows full well that its modernization will take a considerably long period of time. The attainment of this goal requires two indispensable conditions, namely an environment of prolonged peace and stability internationally and prolonged political stability at home. China pursues an independent foreign policy of peace. It always maintains that differences in social system, ideology, cultural tradition and religious belief should not be an obstacle to establishing and developing normal relations between States.

(Mr. Li Peng, China)

China is ready to develop friendly relations with all countries on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. It will never become a threat to any country or any region of the world. China is of the view that no country should seek hegemony or practice power politics. This should be made a principle to be observed universally in international relations. China does not seek a sphere of influence for itself. It does not seek hegemony now and will not seek hegemony in future when it grows stronger.

The past few years have seen a further strengthening and development of friendly and good-neighbourly relations between China and the countries surrounding it, as a result of the concerted efforts of China and those countries. This in our view not only serves the common interests of both China and those countries but also contributes to the peace and development of the region and the world as a whole.

In order to win a genuine peace in the world and create a favourable environment for development for the people of all countries, the international community is focusing more and more on the subject of what kind of new international order should be established. In our view, such basic principles as the sovereign equality of Member States and non-interference in their internal affairs, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, should be observed by all its Members without exception. In compliance with the spirit of the Charter and the established norms governing international relations, and in the light of the changes in the international situation, the Chinese Government wishes to share with the Governments of other countries some of its basic views concerning the establishment of a new international order that will be stable, rational, just and conducive to world peace and development. These basic views are:

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- The new international order should be established on the basis of the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. The core of these principles is non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The people and Governments of the various countries are entitled to adopt the social system and ideology of their own choice in the light of their national conditions.

- All countries, big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are entitled to participate in world affairs as equal members of the international community and to make their own contributions to world peace and development.

- The new international order should include a new economic order. As the ever-widening gap between North and South and the continued exacerbation of the disparities between them have become a destabilizing factor in international life, the establishment of a just and rational new international economic order based on equality, mutual benefit and providing for appropriate handling of the debt burden has become ever more urgent and crucial.

- The human rights and fundamental freedoms of all mankind should be universally respected. Human rights cover many aspects. They include not only civil and political rights but also economic, social and cultural rights. As far as the large number of developing countries is concerned, the rights to independence, subsistence and development are of paramount importance. In essence, the issue of human rights falls within the sovereignty of each country. A country's human rights situation should not be judged in total disregard of its history and national conditions. It is neither appropriate nor workable to demand that all countries measure up to the human rights criteria or models of one country or a small number of

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countries. China values human rights and stands ready to engage in discussion and cooperation with other countries on an equal footing on the question of human rights on the basis of mutual understanding, mutual respect and seeking consensus, while reserving differences. However, it is opposed to interference in the internal affairs of other countries using the human rights issue as an excuse.

- Effective disarmament and arms control should be achieved in a fair, reasonable, comprehensive and balanced manner. Efforts should be stepped up to attain the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear and chemical weapons at an early date and to ban the development of space weapons. Countries in possession of the largest nuclear and conventional arsenals should take the lead in discharging their special responsibilities for disarmament. All nuclear-weapon States should undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and not to use or threaten to use such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-free zones. The nuclear weapons of the disintegrated Soviet Union should be placed under effective control. As the disarmament issue bears on the national security of all States, it should be discussed and addressed with their participation.

- The United Nations should uphold justice and play a more active role in maintaining world peace and promoting development, as well as in helping to establish a new international order. As most States Members of the United Nations belong to the developing world, it is only reasonable for people to expect that the Organization will do more to defend the rights and interests of the developing countries.

In recent years, the United Nations has played an important role in maintaining world peace and security, accelerating the settlement of regional

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conflicts and promoting the economic and social development of various countries. In so doing, the United Nations has enhanced its prestige and that of its Security Council and increased peoples' confidence in the Organization. While affirming this, we must also be aware that the drastic and profound changes in the international situation have led to the re-emergence of numerous contradictions previously hidden from public view, adding to instability in the pursuit of peace and development in the world. It is in this sense that the responsibility of the United Nations and its Security Council has become heavier and that the challenges facing them have grown more formidable.

China is ready to cooperate with all the other members of the Security Council, to discuss issues of common interest to the international community and to exchange views with them as equals in the spirit of seeking common ground while reserving differences, so as to expand areas of consensus. China sincerely hopes that the United Nations and its Security Council will play a still more active and constructive role in international affairs. We now have a newly elected United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali. China supports the work of the Secretary-General and wishes to pledge its full cooperation. We are confident that, in discharging his duties, the Secretary-General will receive extensive support from the developing countries and the international community at large.

It is our hope that this meeting will have a positive impact on the maintenance of world peace and security and that it will play an important role in helping to establish the new international order and to defend the rights and interests of the developing countries, thus making a contribution to the progress of humanity.